

Office of the Secretary, USDA

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(F) Preparing for certification and certifying under the Secretary's facsimile signature, material on file in the Hearing Clerk's office.

(G) Performing any other clerical duties with respect to the documents relative to such proceedings as may be required to be performed.

(H) Cooperating with the Office of Operations in the letting of contracts for stenographic and reporting services; and forwarding vouchers to appropriate agencies for payment.

(I) Receiving and compiling data, views or comments filed in response to notices of proposed standards or rules or regulations.

(J) Performing upon request the following services with respect to any hearings in such proceedings:

(1) Arranging for suitable hearing place.

(2) Arranging for stenographic reporting of hearings and handling details in connection therewith.

(13) *Other general.* (i) Carry out prize competition authorities in section 24 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3719) related to functions otherwise delegated to the Assistant Secretary for Administration, except for authorities delegated to the Chief Financial Officer in § 2.28(a)(29) and authorities reserved to the Secretary in paragraph (b)(3) of this section.

(ii) Provide Departmentwide coordination for efforts to improve customer service.

(b) The following authorities are reserved to the Secretary of Agriculture:

(1) *Related to financial systems and budget formulation and execution.*

(i) Final approval of the Department's program and financial plans.

(ii) [Reserved]

(2) *Related to human resources management.* Make final determinations in the following areas:

(i) Separation of employees for security reasons.

(ii) Restoration to duty of employees following suspension from duty for security reasons.

(iii) Reinstatement or restoration to duty or the employment of any person separated for security reasons.

(iv) Issuance of temporary certificates to occupy sensitive positions.

(3) *Other general.* (i) Approval of prize competitions that may result in the award of more than \$1,000,000 in cash prizes under section 24(m)(4)(B) of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3719(m)(4)(B)).

(ii) [Reserved]

[75 FR 43368, July 23, 2010, as amended at 77 FR 14951, 14952, Mar. 14, 2012; 78 FR 40937, July 9, 2013; 79 FR 44109, July 30, 2014; 80 FR 58337, Sept. 29, 2015; 83 FR 61311, Nov. 29, 2018; 85 FR 65510, Oct. 15, 2020]

EDITORIAL NOTE: At 85 FR 65510, Oct. 15, 2020, § 2.24 was amended by revising paragraph (a)(8) however, there is some extra text included after paragraph (a)(8)(x)(M) starting with paragraph (iii). There is already a paragraph (iii) earlier in the revision.

§ 2.25 Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

(a) The following delegations of authority are made by the Secretary to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights:

(1) Provide overall leadership, coordination, and direction for the Department's programs of civil rights, including program delivery, compliance, and equal employment opportunity, with emphasis on the following:

(i) Actions to enforce Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, prohibiting discrimination in federally assisted programs.

(ii) Actions to enforce Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, prohibiting discrimination in Federal employment.

(iii) Actions to enforce Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681, *et seq.*, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in USDA education programs and activities funded by the Department.

(iv) Actions to enforce the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, 42 U.S.C. 6102, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in USDA programs and activities funded by the Department.

(v) Actions to enforce section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 794, prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities in USDA programs and activities funded or conducted by the Department.

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(vi) Actions to enforce related Executive Orders, Congressional mandates, and other laws, rules, and regulations, as appropriate.

(2) Evaluate Departmental agency programs, activities, and impact statements for civil rights concerns.

(3) Analyze and evaluate program participation data and equal employment opportunity data, and make its analyses available to other appropriate Departmental entities, including the Office of Advocacy and Outreach and affected agencies and mission areas.

(4) Provide leadership and coordinate the Department-wide programs of public notification regarding the availability of USDA programs and employment opportunities on a nondiscriminatory basis.

(5) Coordinate with the Department of Justice on matters relating to title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d), title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681, *et seq.*), and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), except those matters in litigation, including administrative enforcement actions, which shall be coordinated by the Office of General Counsel.

(6) Coordinate with the Department of Health and Human Services on matters relating to the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, 42 U.S.C. 6102, except those matters in litigation, including administrative enforcement actions, which shall be coordinated by the Office of General Counsel.

(7) Order proceedings and hearings in the Department pursuant to §§15.9(e) and 15.86 of this title, which concern consolidated or joint hearings within the Department or with other Federal departments and agencies.

(8) Order proceedings and hearings in the Department pursuant to §15.8 of this title after the program agency has advised the applicant or recipient of his or her failure to comply and has determined that compliance cannot be secured by voluntary means.

(9) Issue orders to give a notice of hearing or the opportunity to request a hearing pursuant to part 15 of this title; arrange for the designation of an Administrative Law Judge to preside over any such hearing; and determine whether the Administrative Law Judge

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so designated will make an initial decision or certify the record to the Secretary with his or her recommended findings and proposed action.

(10) Authorize the taking of action pursuant to §15.8(a) of this title relating to compliance by “other means authorized by law.”

(11) Make determinations required by §15.8(d) of this title that compliance cannot be secured by voluntary means, and then take action, as appropriate.

(12) Make determinations that program complaint investigations performed under §15.6 of this title establish a proper basis for findings of discrimination and that actions taken to correct such findings are adequate.

(13) Investigate (or make determinations that program complaint investigations establish a proper basis for final determinations), make final determinations on both the merits and required corrective action, and, where applicable, make recommendations to the Secretary that relief be granted under 7 U.S.C. 6998(d) notwithstanding the finality of National Appeals Division decisions, as to complaints filed under parts 15a, 15b, and 15d of this title.

(14) Conduct civil rights investigations and compliance reviews Department-wide.

(15) Develop regulations, plans, and procedures necessary to carry out the Department's civil rights programs, including the development, implementation, and coordination of Action Plans.

(16) Related to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). Is designated as the Department's Director of Equal Employment Opportunity with authority:

(i) To perform the functions and responsibilities of that position under 29 CFR part 1614, including the authority:

(A) To make changes in programs and procedures designed to eliminate discriminatory practices and improve the Department's EEO program.

(B) To provide EEO services for managers and employees.

(C) To make final agency decisions, or enter into settlement agreements on EEO complaints by Department employees or applicants for employment and order such corrective measures in response to such complaints as may be

considered necessary, except that in qualifying cases as described in § 2.31(a)(18) the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights must first obtain legal sufficiency review and concurrence by the General Counsel before extending settlement offers or entering into settlement agreements. Corrective measures may include recommending to the Office of Human Resources Management and the affected agency or office that appropriate disciplinary action be taken when an employee has been found to have engaged in a discriminatory practice.

(ii) Administer the Department's EEO program.

(iii) Oversee and manage the EEO counseling function for the Department.

(iv) Process formal EEO complaints by employees or applicants for employment.

(v) Investigate Department EEO complaints and make final decisions on EEO complaints, except in those cases where the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (or a person directly supervised by the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights) has participated in the events that gave rise to the matter.

(vi) Order such corrective measures in EEO complaints as may be considered necessary. Corrective measures may include recommending to the Office of Human Resources Management and the affected agency or office that appropriate disciplinary action be taken when an employee has been found to have engaged in a discriminatory practice.

(vii) Provide liaison on EEO matters concerning complaints and appeals with the Department agencies and Department employees.

(viii) Conduct EEO evaluations and develop policy regarding EEO programs.

(ix) Provide liaison on EEO programs and activities with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Office of Personnel Management.

(17) Administer the discrimination appeals and complaints program for the Department, including all formal individual or group appeals, where the system provides for an avenue of redress to the Department level, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission,

or other outside authority, and provide timely notice of such appeals to the Office of General Counsel and the Civil Rights Director of the affected agency.

(18) Make final determinations, or enter into settlement agreements, on discrimination complaints in federally conducted programs subject to the Equal Credit Opportunity Act. This delegation includes the authority to make compensatory damage awards whether pursuant to a final determination or in a settlement agreement under the authority of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and the authority to obligate agency funds, including Commodity Credit Corporation and Federal Crop Insurance Corporation funds to satisfy such an award.

(19) Make final determinations in proceedings under part 15f of this title where review of an administrative law judge decision is undertaken.

(20) Provide civil rights and equal employment opportunity support services, with authority to take actions required by law or regulation to perform such services for:

(i) The Secretary of Agriculture.

(ii) The general officers of the Department.

(iii) The offices and agencies reporting to the Assistant Secretary for Administration.

(iv) Any other offices or agencies of the Department as may be agreed.

(21) *Related to Alternative Dispute Resolution.*

(i) Designate the senior official to serve as the Department Dispute Resolution Specialist pursuant to section 3 of the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act, Public Law 101-552, as amended (5 U.S.C. 571 note), and provide leadership, direction, and coordination for the Department's conflict prevention and resolution activities.

(ii) Issue Departmental regulations, policies, and procedures relating to the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to resolve employment complaints and grievances, workplace disputes, program complaints alleging civil rights violations, and contract and procurement disputes.

(iii) Provide ADR services for:

(A) The Secretary of Agriculture.

(B) The general officers of the Department.

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(C) The offices and agencies reporting to the Assistant Secretary for Administration.

(D) Any other office or agency of the Department as may be agreed.

(iv) Develop and issue standards for mediators and other ADR neutrals utilized by the Department.

(v) Coordinate ADR activities throughout the Department.

(vi) Monitor agency ADR programs and report at least annually to the Secretary on the Department's ADR activities.

(22) Prepare, submit, and make publicly available the civil rights report required by section 14010 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2279-2).

(23) Redesignate, as appropriate, any authority delegated under paragraphs (a)(1) through (22) of this section to general officers of the Department and heads of Departmental agencies.

(24) Award grants and enter into cooperative agreements, as appropriate, under the following authorities only for the purpose of conducting outreach efforts in connection with the duties and powers delegated to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights under this section:

(i) Grants and cooperative agreements under section 2501(a)(3) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a)(3));

(ii) Cooperative agreements under section 1472(b) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3318(b));

(iii) Grants and cooperative agreements under section 1472(c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3318(c));

(iv) Cooperative agreements under section 607(b)(4) of the Rural Development Act of 1972 (7 U.S.C. 2204b(b)(4)); and

(v) Cooperative agreements under section 714 of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001 (7 U.S.C. 6962a).

(25) Carry out prize competition authorities in section 24 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3719) related to functions otherwise delegated to the Assistant

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Secretary for Civil Rights, except for authorities delegated to the Chief Financial Officer in § 2.28(a)(29) and authorities reserved to the Secretary in paragraph (b)(1) of this section.

(26) As directed by section 12403(a) of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, conduct civil rights impact analyses in accordance with Departmental Regulation 4300-004 issued on October 17, 2016, with respect to the Department's employment, federally conducted programs and activities, and federally assisted programs and activities.

(b) The following authorities are reserved to the Secretary of Agriculture:

(1) Approval of prize competitions that may result in the award of more than \$1,000,000 in cash prizes under section 24(m)(4)(B) of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3719(m)(4)(B)).

(2) [Reserved]

[77 FR 14953, Mar. 14, 2012, as amended at 78 FR 40937, July 9, 2013; 79 FR 44109, July 30, 2014; 80 FR 58337, Sept. 29, 2015; 85 FR 65512, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 2.26 Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs.

(a) The following delegations of authority are made by the Secretary of Agriculture to the Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs:

(1) *Related to foreign agriculture.* (i) Coordinate the carrying out by Department agencies of their functions involving foreign agricultural policies and programs and their operations and activities in foreign areas. Act as liaison on these matters and functions relating to foreign agriculture between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of State, the United States Trade Representative, the Trade Policy Committee, the Agency for International Development, and other departments, agencies, and committees of the U.S. Government, foreign governments, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the European Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Organization of American States,